

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah 2003

December 19, 2003

I send greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of lights.

During Hanukkah, people of the Jewish faith around the world mark the triumph of Jews against tyranny and oppression more than two millennia ago. With courage and unfailing faith, the Maccabees secured the Jewish people's freedom and reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. As they prepared to rededicate the Temple, there was only enough oil for one day, but the light continued to burn for eight days. Today, the lighting of the Menorah represents this ancient miracle and brings a message of hope and freedom to the Jewish people.

As families and friends share in the joyous traditions of Hanukkah, we recognize the power of faith to accomplish miracles and bring light from the darkness. We join in giving thanks for the blessings God has granted to our Nation. May the joy of Hanukkah and the peace and goodwill of the season fill our hearts and inspire us to lead lives of compassion.

Laura joins me in wishing you a blessed and Happy Hanukkah.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message on the Observance of Christmas 2003

December 19, 2003

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:14

As families and friends gather to celebrate Christmas, we remember all the blessings that fill our lives, beginning with the great blessing that came on a holy night in Bethlehem. For Christians around the world, the birth of Jesus is a central religious event; an example of God's profound love for humanity; and the pathway to hope and to new life.

Today, the Christmas story still speaks to every generation.

This holiday season, as we share in the spirit of giving and enjoy familiar Christmas traditions, we give thanks for the wonder of God's love and rededicate ourselves to helping those in need. We also pray for our brave men and women in uniform, many of whom will spend the holidays far from home. Their courage and dedication is helping keep us safe and extending freedom and peace. We are grateful for their service to our country, and for the support and sacrifice of their families.

Laura joins me in wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the peace and goodwill of the season fill every heart and warm every home.

George W. Bush

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Message on the Observance of Kwanzaa 2003

December 19, 2003

I send greetings to those observing Kwanzaa.

Celebrated by millions across the world, Kwanzaa honors the history and heritage of Africa. This seven-day observance is an opportunity for individuals of African descent to remember the sacrifices of their ancestors and reflect on the *Nguzo Saba*. Kwanzaa's seven social and spiritual principles offer strength and guidance to meet the challenges of each new day.

During this joyous time of year, Americans renew our commitment to hope, understanding, and the great promise of our Nation. In honoring the traditions of Africa, Kwanzaa strengthens the ties that bind individuals in communities across our country and around the world.

Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a joyous Kwanzaa.

George W. Bush

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